



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Head Start

Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnership Program Grants

HHS-2020-ACF-OHS-YT-1851

Application Due Date: 07/02/2020

Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnership Program Grants
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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Funding Opportunity Title:	Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnership Program Grants
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	HHS-2020-ACF-OHS-YT-1851
Primary CFDA Number:	93.600
Due Date for Applications:	07/02/2020

Executive Summary

Notice:

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants & Funding Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the Office of Head Start (OHS) announces the availability of \$4,000,000 to be competitively awarded to tribal colleges and universities for the purpose of establishing or enhancing partnerships with Head Start programs to effectively increase the number of qualified education staff working in American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Early childhood educators are increasingly recognized for the critical role they can play improving outcomes, particularly for children at risk of delays due to poverty, exposure to trauma, and other circumstances.

Tribal College and University Head Start Partnership Programs (TCU-HS Partnership Programs) funded through this announcement will offer carefully designed, high-quality, accessible, and flexible programs that increase the number of qualified staff eligible for Head Start and Early Head Start education positions. Successful applicants will partner with one or more AIAN Head Start grantees and will identify the number of students to be enrolled, how the students will be retained through the program design and responsive and effective supports, and the number of credentials or degrees expected to be conferred. TCU-HS Partnership Programs will include all the supports necessary for AIAN current or potential staff member to successfully participate in the program and acquire degrees or credentials.

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

This funding is authorized by Division A, Title II of the Further Consolidated Appropriations

Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116-94). The Head Start program is authorized by the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. § 9843(g)).

Description

OVERVIEW OF HEAD START PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since its 1965 inception, Head Start and Early Head Start have served more than 37 million children and families throughout the nation. The [Head Start Program Performance Standards \(HSPPS\)](#) and the Head Start Act describe the requirements for operating Head Start and Early Head Start programs for children and families. Grantees provide two-generation child development and family support services to pregnant women, young children from birth to age 5, and their families. OHS provides grants to local agencies to provide comprehensive services to predominately economically disadvantaged children and their families. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, Head Start provided funding to approximately 1,600 grantees to serve 1,047,000 children and families, a number that included more than 244,000 infants and toddlers and over 288,000 children who are dual language learners. In FY 2019, Head Start provided funding to 154 American Indian tribal governments or consortia grantees that served over 23,000 children and their families.

To meet the needs of our nation's most vulnerable children and families, Head Start/Early Head Start grantees provide comprehensive early childhood services, including education, health, mental health, nutrition, and family engagement services to promote improved outcomes. Head Start/Early Head Start grantees are required to serve children and families with the greatest need including children who live in foster care, children with disabilities, and children and families who are experiencing homelessness. Special eligibility provisions for AIAN program enrollment are provided and can be found in the above link to the HSPPS.

Head Start has played a historic role in professionalizing the field of early childhood education. Educators who both possess child development knowledge, key teaching and relationship competencies, and are culturally and linguistically responsive to the children and families they serve are vital to improving child outcomes. Head Start also recognizes parents as their children's first teachers and requires that parents have roles in the program's operations and governance. Partnerships with colleges and universities have contributed by increasing the number and accessibility to early childhood education degree programs, including the entry-level Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Head Start has had a trajectory of increasing the credential requirements of their staff since 1970. There is also a requirement that parents have opportunities for Head Start employment. Often, parents begin their employment within the program in paraprofessional positions, then are supported in attaining degrees and achieving career mobility. This contributes to the ability of Head Start programs to employ staff who are representative of the enrolled children and families as well as offering career opportunities for parents. Over 20 percent of the Head Start work force are current or former Head Start parents.

The Head Start Act describes the minimum qualifications for Head Start educators, which includes the following requirements: a (CDA) or equivalent for Early Head Start teachers, an associate's degree for center-based preschool teachers, and possessing or being enrolled to obtain a CDA or equivalent credential for preschool teacher assistants. While nationally approximately 97 percent of Head Start preschool teachers have an associate's degree and 74

percent of Head Start preschool teachers have a baccalaureate degree, AIAN programs often face greater challenges recruiting and retaining qualified staff for education positions than many other Head Start programs. AIAN programs are often geographically isolated, have reduced educational opportunities, and have higher poverty and unemployment rates compared to other communities. Additional challenges include finding staff that have both the early childhood content expertise and education as well as cultural and language knowledge of the communities they are serving. Currently, 23 percent of teachers in AIAN preschool classrooms lack the required minimum of an associate's degree and 33 percent of Early Head Start teachers in AIAN programs lack the minimum of a CDA or equivalent. An even larger number of preschool teacher assistants do not meet the minimum credential requirement and are not enrolled in a credential program. Head Start programs in closer (less than 20 miles) proximity to Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) have some of the *lowest* rates of credentialed teachers.

Expectations of TCU-HS Partnership Program Grantees

The TCU-HS Partnership Program grants will be awarded to TCUs that articulate a successful history of administering an early childhood education degree program and commit to specific targets for the number of degrees or credentials to be awarded and the methods for recruiting and retaining students. TCU-HS Partnership Program grants will demonstrate strong partnerships with one or more AIAN Head Start programs.

Importantly, the TCU must also offer a degree program that fully reflects current early childhood education best practice. Degrees obtained through the TCU-HS Partnership Program should confer confidence that the holder has the knowledge and competencies needed to support children's progress and development in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner. The TCU should be familiar with the research-based [HSPPS](#).

These partnerships will explicitly identify the obligations and benefits to each partner, including identifying specific goals for enrollee numbers and timelines for degree attainment; describing methods of oversight and measurement; and outlining the capacity for course correction and ongoing improvement.

ACF and OHS expect to fund innovative and convincing proposals to meet the unique needs of individual AIAN communities. Earlier iterations of OHS grants to TCUs demonstrated that the following factors, among others, resulted in higher success: strong, personal support for enrollees; flexibility in course delivery and design (e.g., on-site, distance learning, innovative approach); ability to provide preliminary or remedial instruction; assistance with tuition, books; and other costs, articulation agreements that permit transfer of credit to and from multiple colleges or universities; and credit for professional experience. OHS anticipates partnerships will propose these and other specifically responsive strategies.

Management Accountability

TCU-HS Partnership Program grant implementation is expected to be complex. Grantees will need to develop effective ongoing communication and partnership with one or more AIAN Head Start grantees. The Head Start partner is expected to provide meaningful initial and ongoing input in the design and oversight of the partnership. The partners should be mutually aware of goals and timelines to ensure expectations are being met.

The successful TCU-HS Partnership Program applicant will provide an organized and transparent management structure to ensure adequate communication and support between

partners and OHS to assure all stakeholders that the project will meet its specific goals to recruit, retain, and award credentials or degrees to the identified number of Head Start AIAN current or potential staff. A signed partnership agreement will define the responsibilities of the TCU and AIAN Head Start program(s). A successful partnership between the TCU and AIAN program will include the following: evidence that the Head Start partner(s) was included in the application development; detailed education plans, including the identification of existing, to be adopted or developed course work; established articulation agreements; established explicit requirements for course work per semester; the plan for individualized student advising and coaching; and the plan for providing ongoing support to help Head Start staff overcome the added challenges that nontraditional students face.

Staff Accountability

It is expected that the TCUs will employ at least one full-time (and more if needed based on design and enrollment) staff person who is dedicated to the grant. Staff will have responsibility for meeting all related coordination, communication and reporting requirements. The TCU staff is expected to be familiar with the HSPPS and the partner program operations. Additionally, TCU staff must have knowledge of the potential strengths and challenges of adult learners who may be far removed from formal education. The TCU should have expertise in varying delivery methods needed to reach diverse adult students who may be spread across a wide geographic area with extremely varied experience and knowledge upon program entry. The TCU staff will be responsible for in-person attendance at up to two meetings per year. At times the TCU grantee may be asked to identify professors or other TCU and Head Start staff to attend or present at meetings of TCU-HS Partnership grantees.

Coursework and Delivery

The TCU-HS Partnership grant programs must offer coursework that leads to degrees and credentials that meet the needs of their Head Start partners. This may include associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees and/or an entry-level credential for infant and toddler teachers or preschool teacher assistants that has a pathway for articulation to a degree.

TCUs may find a combination of credential and degree programs offers the best career pathway for Head Start partner staff (e.g., a credential that allows the staff member to be a teacher assistant with credit that applies to an associate degree program); however, applicants are expected to provide the degree and credential options and pathways based on the needs of their AIAN Head Start partners. Based on the assessment of need with Head Start partners, TCUs are encouraged to include tribal language or culture classes within their degree requirements. Some applicants may want to review the free in-person and online higher education courses available through the EarlyEdU alliance (<https://www.earlyedualliance.org/courses/>). OHS funded the development of this high-quality coursework and it is available to colleges and universities.

The TCU-HS Partnership grantees will increase the number of qualified AIAN Head Start staff through programs that:

1. Are responsive to the specific needs of the AIAN Head Start partner(s), including identifying needs such as access to technology and corresponding technical support;
2. Meet the educational needs of adult learners with diverse backgrounds;
3. Mitigate or eliminate access barriers, such as location or scheduling, through distance learning, on-site or community-based classes, or innovative approaches;

4. Include both knowledge and competencies required for effective teaching of young children in AIAN Head Start, including tribal culture and language;
5. Support individual enrollee needs, as necessary, through help accessing tuition reimbursement programs, direct tuition assistance, provision of books and technology, assistance with transportation and other costs related to enrollment, as well as ongoing student support and academic counseling;
6. Consider and incorporate course design and delivery methods, such as on-line course work with necessary technical and location-based coaching, that yield the highest completion rates for adults in higher education; and
7. Incorporate learning cohorts or communities, use of on-site tutors or coaches, and other program and peer supports shown to result in higher completion rates.

Working with OHS

Grantees will be required to attend no more than two meetings per year to share information on progress, improvements, and innovations with OHS and other TCU-HS Partnership grantees.

Program Performance and Continuous Improvement

Ultimately, TCU-HS Partnership Program grantees will be judged on their success in enrolling and graduating the target number of students within the identified timelines. We encourage applicants to accurately assess needs and barriers and propose robust solutions with a high likelihood of success.

Applicants must have the ability to respond quickly and effectively to unforeseen events and challenges that will likely affect grantee success. Grantees will collect and submit quarterly data about enrollment and progress and are expected to use such data within the partnership to constantly refine and improve their efforts.

Federal Evaluation

As a condition of acceptance of an award under this FOA, all grantees are required to participate fully in ACF-sponsored evaluations and adhere to all evaluation protocols established by ACF to be carried out by its designated contractors.

Subawards

Recipients under this grant program may opt to transfer a portion of substantive programmatic work to other organizations through subaward(s). The prime recipient is responsible for oversight of all programmatic, financial, and administrative matters, including reporting, related to the grant. This responsibility includes oversight of these matters as they relate to the subrecipient(s).

In addition, the prime recipient must maintain a substantive role in the project. ACF defines a substantive role as conducting activities and/or providing services funded under the award that are necessary and integral to the completion of the project. Subrecipient monitoring activities alone, as specified in 45 CFR § 75.352, do not constitute a substantive role. Furthermore, ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute. See *Section IV.6. Application and Submission Information, Funding Restrictions* for more information.

Subrecipient(s) must meet the eligibility requirements identified in *Section III.1. Eligibility Information, Eligible Applicants*. Additionally, all subrecipient(s) must obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number if they do not already have one. Prime recipients are required to check the System for Award Management (SAM) to verify that the subrecipient(s) is/are not debarred, suspended, or ineligible. See *Section IV.3. Application and Submission Information, Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

The prime recipient must conduct a risk assessment of subrecipient(s) in accordance with 45 CFR § 75.352(b). Prime recipients are required to adhere to the requirements noted in 45 CFR § 75.352 and be in compliance with 45 CFR § 75.351 and § 75.353. Prime recipients may be required to report under the Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). Information about the FFATA is located at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-for-federal-financial-accountability-and-transparency>.

Should a subrecipient perform unsatisfactorily, the prime recipient is responsible for remedying subrecipient issues. The prime recipient will be held accountable for cost disallowances regarding subawarded funds. Subrecipient performance will also be considered during review of applications for non-competing continuations. If requirements of the program cannot be met due to subrecipient issues, ACF may need to take one or more of the actions listed under 45 CFR § 75.371-.375.

If the applicant proposes to issue subaward(s), but has not yet identified the subrecipient organization(s) by the time of application submission, if awarded, the prime recipient must submit a prior approval request with the name of the subrecipient organization(s), updated description(s) of the work to be performed, and updated subaward budget(s) and budget justification(s). This information must be submitted within 90 days of the start date of the grant. If a subaward was not originally proposed in the application, but later becomes necessary, ACF prior approval is required before any activities in the subaward request begin.

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

The successful applicant awarded under this FOA must adhere to the following:

- The project will be operational within 60 days following the financial assistance award start date.
- Within 120 days of the start date of the financial assistance award, key TCU-HS Partnership Program grantee staff will meet OHS for the initial briefing on plans, timelines, and deliverables for this project.
- Within 45 days of the initial project briefing with OHS, the grantee will address any OHS comments, clarifications, or requested revisions of the work plan and submit for OHS review and approval.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

If, during the project period, OHS and/or grantees are required to adjust program and/or grant requirements due to the coronavirus and COVID-19 or other emergency, OHS will exercise maximum flexibilities as needed. Requirements may be conducted virtually or timelines modified in consultation with OHS.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Estimated Total Funding:	\$4,000,000
Expected Number of Awards:	8
Award Ceiling:	\$4,000,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$500,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$500,000 Per Budget Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	09/30/2020

Length of Project Periods:

Length of Project Period:	60-month project period with five 12-month budget periods
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Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include the following: Tribal Colleges and Universities as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)).

Applicants other than TCUs will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Eligibility Information, Other, Application*

Disqualification Factors.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by a recipient or subrecipient and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the recipient will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

III.3. Other

Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the www.Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be**

disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

OHS Disqualification Factor

Funding made available through this announcement is limited to TCUs fully accredited by the U.S. Department of Education. Applications received from entities who are not fully accredited as a TCU will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Notification of Application Disqualification

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

HHS-2020-ACF-OHS-YT-1851

Office of Head Start

OHS Operations Center

1401 Mercantile Lane

Suite 401

Largo, MD 20774

Phone: (888) 242-0684

Email: OHSTech@reviewops.org

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the FOA's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at www.Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

Each applicant applying electronically via www.Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

Accepted Font Style

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read comfortably, will be removed.

English Language

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

Page Limitations

Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.

All applications must be double-spaced. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project

Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

NOTE: Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications

When applicants make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

The page limitation is 75 pages for the Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, Project Description, and Appendices. Page limitations are identical for electronic and paper formats application submissions.

Applications must not exceed the 75-page limit for all of the components in the First and Second Files or pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.

First File

- Project Summary/Abstract (*single-spaced*)
- Table of Contents (*single-spaced*)
- Project Description (*double-spaced*)
 - Management Accountability
 - Staff Accountability
 - Coursework and Delivery
 - Working with the Office of Head Start
 - Program Performance Evaluation and Continuous Improvement
 - Budget and Budget Justification

Second File

- Appendices (*must be readable*)
 - Proof of Legal Status of Applicant
 - Organizational Capacity documentation (e.g., resumes, curricula vitae, job descriptions, organizational charts)
 - Third-party agreements
 - Indirect cost rate agreement (IDR)
 - Plan for Oversight of Federal Awards Funds and activities
 - Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information
 - Executed Leases, draft leases, unsigned leases, or a letter of intent for each proposed property(ies). **Note:** The lease documentation **will not** count towards the page limitation.

- Additional Eligibility Documentation
- Other supporting documents

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.

File One: Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

File Two: Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

Adherence to the Two-File Requirement

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Acrobat Reader software will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Acrobat Reader they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Applicants” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under “Applicant Resources.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test Workspace PDF form. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions for use, if an applicant is unable to open the test form.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for

applicants on filling out a Workspace PDF form. In addition, it addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov. Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces). Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov's naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF's systems, are listed in the instructions available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" at Grants.gov. Please also see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "*ACF Policy on Requesting an*

Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the FOA's Synopsis on www.Grants.gov under the Package tab.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at www.Grants.gov.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
SF-LLL - Disclosure	If submission of this form is	If any funds have been paid or will be

of Lobbying Activities	applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.

	award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov .	
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

Mandatory Grant Disclosure

All applicants and recipients are required to submit, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR § 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

And to:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

Fax: (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or

Email: MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

General Expectations and Instructions

The Project Description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for financial assistance. It must address all activities for which federal funds are being requested and all application requirements as stated in this section. The Project Description must explain how the project will meet the purpose of the FOA, as described in *Section I. Program Description*. As a reminder, reviewers will be evaluating this section in accordance with *Section V.I. Criteria*.

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the FOA.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents may be single spaced.

Project Summary

Provide a summary of the application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Website Address, if applicable

The Project Summary must be single-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Additional Eligibility Documentation

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement.

Applicants must include a copy of their accreditation with their application.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

The applicant must include a plan for how the TCU-HS Partnership Program will increase the number of qualified Head Start and Early Head Start educators working in or available to work in AIAN Head Start programs. The applicant must describe their partnership with one or more AIAN Head Start grantees, the need for the partnership, the solutions to existing barriers, the number of people to be enrolled, the supports to ensure the access and success of enrolled students, and how many students are projected to receive credentials or degrees. It is expected that TCU-HS Partnership will include, either directly or through articulation agreements, opportunities to increase education attainment from entry-level to baccalaureate and possibly advanced degrees.

Management Accountability

Applicants must describe effective ongoing communication and partnership with one or more AIAN Head Start grantees. Describe how the Head Start partners will provide meaningful initial and ongoing input in the design and oversight of the partnership. Explain how partners will be mutually aware of goals and timelines to ensure expectations are being met.

Applicants must describe their management structure that will ensure adequate communication between partners and with OHS to assure all stakeholders that the project is meeting its specific goals to recruit, retain, and award credentials or degrees to the identified number of AIAN current or potential staff. A signed partnership agreement will define the responsibilities of the TCU and AIAN Head Start program(s) partners and must be submitted with the application.

Staff Accountability

The applicant must provide assurance that staff will be dedicated to the grant and have responsibility for meeting all related coordination, communication, and reporting requirements.

The TCU staff is expected to be familiar with the HSPPS and the partner program operations. Describe expertise in varying delivery methods needed to reach diverse adult students who may be spread across a wide geographic area with extremely varied experience and knowledge upon program entry. Include a plan for how TCU-HS Partnership Program staff will provide quarterly reporting to OHS and attend in-person meetings in Washington, DC, or other venue, up to two times per year.

Coursework and Delivery

The TCU-HS Partnership grant programs must explain how coursework will lead to degrees and credentials that meet the needs of their Head Start partners. Applicants must also describe which of the following degrees will be offered: associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees or entry-level credential for infant and toddler teachers or preschool teacher assistants. TCUs must determine the need for the proposed credential and degree programs and describe how the selection offers the best career pathway for Head Start partner staff (e.g., applicants describe the

degree and credential options they will provide based on the needs of their AIAN Head Start partners and how entry level credentials may articulate with degree programs).

TCU-HS Partnership applicants will explain how their credential and degree paths will increase the number of qualified AIAN Head Start staff through programming that meets the following requirements:

1. Is responsive to the specific needs of the AIAN Head Start partner(s), including identifying needs such as access to technology and corresponding technical support;
2. Meets the educational needs of adult learners with diverse backgrounds;
3. Mitigates or eliminates access barriers, such as location or scheduling, through distance learning, on-site or community-based classes, or innovative approaches;
4. Includes both knowledge and competencies required for effective teaching of young children in AIAN Head Start, including tribal culture and language;
5. Supports individual enrollee needs, as necessary, through help accessing tuition reimbursement programs, direct tuition assistance, provision of books and technology, assistance with transportation, and other costs related to enrollment, as well as ongoing student support and academic counseling;
6. Considers and incorporates course design and delivery methods, such as online course work with necessary technical and location-based coaching, that yield highest completion rates for adults in higher education; and
7. Incorporates learning cohorts or communities, use of on-site tutors or coaches, and other program and peer supports shown to result in higher completion rates.

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes;
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners, contractors and/or subrecipients, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively.
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

In addition to these requested documents, please include:

- Clear descriptions of TCU-HS Partnership Program staff roles and identify how these roles will meet the requirements of the program, as described in *Section I. Program Description*; and
- A detailed narrative of each partners' staff, activities, outputs, and expected outcomes on

this project.

If known at the time of application submission, the applicant must disclose their intent to enter into subaward arrangements in their application. For each proposed subaward, the applicant must include a description of the work to be performed by the subrecipient(s).

If applicable, for each property rented and proposed for use during the project period for which funds will be charged as a direct or indirect cost to the grant made under this FOA, the applicant must provide an executed lease. If a lease has not been executed prior to submission of an application, the applicant must submit an actual draft of the unsigned lease or a letter of intent describing the potential arrangement including address, terms, length, and proposed expenses.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities

Grantees are required to ensure proper oversight in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. These regulations set forth the following standards for effective oversight:

- Financial and Program Management
- Property (if applicable by program legislation)
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance

Describe the framework (e.g. governance, policies and procedures, risk management, systems) in place to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. The description must include: system(s) for record-keeping and financial management; procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues (e.g., audit findings, continuous program performance assessment findings, program monitoring); and those key staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff, and, if applicable, partner(s) and/or subrecipient(s).

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe a plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing activities and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured; how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities; and any processes that support the overall data quality of the performance outcomes.

Applicants must describe the organizational systems and processes that will effectively track performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g., assign skilled staff, data management software, data integrity, etc.) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe

any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed. Applicants must include a timeline for how information from the quality improvement evaluation will be reviewed and applied to the ongoing project.

If proposing to use subawards the applicant must describe their plan to monitor their subrecipients in accordance with 45 CFR 75.352.

The applicant must outline a plan of action for 5 years of the project and a detailed plan for year 1, specifically describing how AIAN Head Start staff or potential will be recruited, target outcomes, and how activities will be accomplished to meet the goals for credential or degree attainment. The applicant must include visual diagrams that depict the relationship between inputs, key activities, and expected outcomes. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured and how data will be used for ongoing improvements and rapid cycle decision making. Specifically, the plan will include a description for how the applicant will measure and report staff enrollment, progress, and attainment of goal.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

Provide a description of how protected personally identifiable information and other information that is considered sensitive, consistent with applicable federal, state, local and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, will be collected and safeguarded. The applicant must provide the methods and/or systems that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and if applicable, address the process for subrecipient(s) and/or contractors. Also, provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment and MOUs must both clearly describe the roles and responsibilities for project activities and the support and/or resources that the third-party (i.e., subrecipient, contractor, or other cooperating entity) is committing. The Letters of Commitment and MOUs must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements.

Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment or MOUs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities). In addition to clearly describing the roles and responsibilities for project activities and support and/or resources that the third-party is committing, these agreements must detail work schedules and estimated remuneration with an understanding that a finalized agreement will be negotiated once the successful applicant is awarded the grant.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the

Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: *The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2020 and Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, (Division A, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$197,300. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget for the initial budget period only (typically the first 12 months of the project) using the SF-424A and/or SF-424C, as applicable.

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for only the first budget period of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

The TCU-HS Partnership Program must designate adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities and ensure that the proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits. The budget must also reflect:

- Justification for costs to provide sufficient support for enrolled participants while ensuring the funds are used efficiently so as many participants obtain credentials and degrees as possible within reasonable time periods;
- Adequate TCU-HS Partnership Program staff to implement the program, ensure coordination and communication with AIAN Head Start partner program(s), and provide oversight and program improvement;
- Travel for key staff to meet with OHS for the initial briefing regarding the plans for carrying out all components of this project;
- Travel and materials needed for one to two meetings per year with OHS and other TCU-HS Partnership Program grantees as described under the *Section I. Program Description*.

For applicants proposing to use subaward(s), if the total amount budgeted for subawards exceeds 50 percent of total direct costs for the budget period, the applicant must provide a

justification for subawarding the portion of the project and must explain how the prime recipient plans to maintain a substantive role in the project. Applicants must explain why the participation of the subrecipient is necessary, and why the applicant cannot achieve the objectives without the subrecipient(s)' participation.

Facilities

Applicants must delineate any properties that will be used or proposed for use during the project period and for which funds will be charged to the grant made under this FOA as a direct or indirect cost. Properties must be organized into the following three categories: owned, leased (current lease already in place), or intent to lease (through either a letter of intent or an actual draft/unsigned lease). If a lease(s) has not been executed prior to submission of an application, the applicant must submit an actual draft or the unsigned lease or a letter of intent describing the potential arrangement including address, terms, length, and proposed expenses.

The applicant must identify if the arrangement is an "arm's-length" or "less-than-arms-length" lease and provide how costs are calculated in accordance with 45 CFR § 75.465 (Rental costs of real property and equipment) and 45 CFR § 75.436 (Depreciation).

In the list of properties, include a detailed breakdown of **all proposed costs**. It must be clear which costs are related to which property. In the budget justification, include a corresponding detailed narrative explanation of the purpose and need for each proposed cost under this grant award to determine reasonableness, allocability, and allowability of costs. Each property must include a breakdown of proposed costs and narrative, including all of the following, if applicable: the allocable percentage and total dollar amount, the depreciation amount with type of method and calculation used; rent amount with calculation, terms of lease, tax amount, insurance amount and what it covers, maintenance and repair amounts with details on each type of expense proposed and its associated cost; minor alterations and renovations with specifics for each type of proposed expense and its associated cost.

For ACF property related policy and guidance, please refer to the ACF website at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property>.

Use the following guidelines for preparing the project budget and budget justification. The budget justification includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail. Applications should only include allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages. See 45 CFR § 75.430 for more information on allowable personnel costs. Do not include the personnel costs of consultants, contractors and subrecipients under this category.

Justification: For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on

Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR § 75.431. Do not include the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients.

Typically, fringe benefit amounts are determined by applying a calculated rate for a particular class of employee (full-time or part-time) to the salary and wages requested. Fringe rates are often specified in the approved indirect cost rate agreement. Fringe benefits may be treated as a direct cost or indirect cost in accordance with the applicant's accounting practices. Only fringe benefits as a direct cost should be entered under this category.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement, taxes, etc.

Travel

Description: Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence) by employees of the applicant organization who are in travel status on official business. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the Contractual line item. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the Other line. Travel costs should be developed in accordance with the applicant's travel policies and 45 CFR § 75.474.

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of travelers; travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.) See 45 CFR § 75.439 for more information.

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposition of the equipment after the project ends.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property, other than included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than

\$5,000. See 45 CFR § 75.453 for more information.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Cost of all contracts and subawards except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contract or subawards with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Costs related to individual consultants should be listed on the Other line. Recipients are required to use 45 CFR §§ 75.326-.340 procurement procedures, and subawards are subject to the requirements at 45 CFR §§ 75.351-.353.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Memorandum M-18-18: Implementing Statutory Change to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance](#) and 48 CFR Subpart 2.1 (when amended accordingly). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Indicate whether the proposed agreement qualified as a subaward or contract in accordance with 45 CFR § 75.351. Provide the name of the contractor/subrecipient (if known), a description of anticipated services, a justification for why they are necessary, a breakdown of estimated costs, and an explanation of the selection process. In addition, for subawards, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each subaward, by entity name, along with the same justifications referred to in these budget and budget justification instructions.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel, insurance, food (when allowable), medical and dental costs (non-personnel), professional service costs (including audit charges), space and equipment rentals, printing and publications, computer use, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs. Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of costs, computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1. The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the objective review or award selection process.

2. Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, "any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time."

Justification: This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent *de minimis* rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

For awards that require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily

contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in the approved budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Justification: If an applicant is relying on cost share or match from a third-party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards).

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I. Criteria* of this announcement.

Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 02/28/2022. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

Electronic Delivery

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Obtain a DUNS Number: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

Register with SAM: In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

Create a Grants.gov Account: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

Authorize Grants.gov Roles: After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

Track Role Status: To track your role request, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each FOA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is

completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

Track a Workspace: After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at [www.acf.hhs.gov /sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

To request an exemption from required electronic submission please refer to ACF's "Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" document for complete guidance at:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from_required_electronic.pdf.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*."

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with

these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of their efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **07/02/2020**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior

to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Emergency Extensions

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer

listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:

ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_Review_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on

proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 330 C St. SW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20201.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit of funds to other organizations, unless that arrangement is authorized by statute. In the absence of such statutory authority, each prime recipient's primary role must be to ensure the delivery of the statutorily authorized services, whether provided directly or through collaborative involvement with their subrecipient(s).

Please refer to Unallowable Property Costs on the ACF website at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property#chapter-9> for more information.

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Submission By Mail

Office of Head Start
OHS Operations Center
1401 Mercantile Lane
Suite 401
Largo, MD 20774

Hand Delivery

Office of Head Start
OHS Operations Center
1401 Mercantile Lane
Suite 401
Largo, MD 20774

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via www.Grants.gov.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: With the exception of the funding opportunity announcement and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

The review of applications under this FOA will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. The review panel will assign numerical scores for each evaluation criterion based on a range of points (0 points - total point value), taking into consideration the extent to which the application narrative includes substantial and compelling evidence that describes their implementation and the soundness of their plans.

1. Management Accountability

Maximum Points:20

To evaluate Management Accountability, reviewers will consider the applicant's ability to design and implement an organized and transparent management structure that includes ongoing communication with AIAN Head Start partner(s). In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will consider the degree to which the following narrative elements are well thought out, well designed, and well described:

- The approach to administering the project, including organizational development, project implementation and evaluation.
- The signed partnership agreement(s) with one or more AIAN Head Start programs that includes a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of the TCU and AIAN Head Start program(s).
- The specific numbers of students to be recruited and enrolled, efforts to ensure students are retained, and the number of credentials or degrees to be awarded.
- The plan for how the management structure will ensure effective oversight and monitoring of recruitment, enrollment, and progress of current or potential AIAN Head Start staff.
- The timeline for meeting proposed goals for degree and credential attainment.

2. Staff Accountability

Maximum Points:20

To evaluate Staff Accountability, reviewers will consider the applicant's ability to ensure that key staff will have expertise, knowledge, and credentials relevant to assigned role(s) (e.g., early childhood education, Head Start, cultural and linguistic competencies, adult learning, distance learning,) as well as experience working with diverse communities. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will consider the degree to which the following narrative elements are well-thought-out, well designed and well described:

- Staff qualifications and experience demonstrates proposed staff have Head Start/Early Head Start experience.
- Staff reflects on Head Start's culture and language diversity and have experience in working with diverse adult learners.
- Staff qualifications and experience demonstrates knowledge and skill in:
 - Communicating effectively to build relationships between programs, ensure mutual understanding, identify and solve problems;
 - Knowledge of how the AIAN Partner Program(s) operate, including familiarity with HSPPS and understanding of staffing needs and challenges; and
 - Expertise in adult learning strengths and challenges.
- Expertise in varied delivery methods to meet unique needs and challenges of enrollees, include site-based course, online learning, and innovative approaches.

3. Coursework and Delivery

Maximum Points:30

To evaluate Coursework and Delivery, reviewers will consider the applicant's ability to assess diverse audience needs and provide responsive and high-quality credential and degree programs that meet the required academic and competency requirements of Head

Start and Early Head Start staff. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will consider the degree to which the following narrative elements are well-thought-out, well-designed and well-described and:

- The project responds to the specific needs of the AIAN partner(s), including identifying needs such as access to technology and corresponding technical support;
- The plan meets the educational needs of adult learners with diverse backgrounds;
- The plan mitigates or eliminates access barriers, such as location or scheduling, through distance learning, on-site or community-based classes, or innovative approaches;
- The description includes both knowledge and competencies required for effective teaching of young children in AIAN Head Start;
- The plan provides specific instruction and resources supporting the language and culture of enrolled teachers and the young children they teach, including supporting the development of home language;
- The plan supports individual enrollee needs, as necessary, through help accessing tuition reimbursement programs, direct tuition assistance, provision of books and technology, assistance for transportation, and other costs related to enrollment;
- The plan considers and incorporates course design and delivery methods that yield highest completion rates for adults in higher education;
- The plan incorporates learning cohorts or communities, use of on-site tutors or coaches, and other program and peer supports shown to result in higher completion rates.

4. Working with OHS

Maximum Points:10

To evaluate Working with OHS, reviewers will review the extent to which the applicant describes:

- Its well-thought out and well-designed plan for providing ongoing communication, with the input and perspective of the AIAN Head Start partner(s), to OHS, including information on challenges and the program's progress.

5. Program Performance Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Maximum Points:10

To evaluate Program Performance Evaluation and Continuous Improvement, reviewers will consider the applicant's plan to ensure it will enroll and graduate the target number of students within the identified timelines. The applicant's ability to review, collect, and use data for improvements that resolve challenges and result in an efficient, effective program leading to AIAN Head Start current and prospective staff with increased credentials and degrees. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will consider the degree to which the following narrative elements are well-thought-out, well designed and well described:

- Plan to accurately assess need and barriers and propose robust solutions with a high likelihood of success.
- Description of applicant capacity to respond quickly and effectively to unforeseen events and challenges

- Plan for collecting data on enrollment and participant progress and expected use of such data within the partnership to constantly refine and improve approach.

6. Project Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:10

To evaluate the Project Budget and Budget Justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant designates adequate resources to carry out the expected and proposed activities while ensuring that the proposed costs are reasonable. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will deliberate the following narrative elements:

- The budget is clearly outlined and aligned with the activities of the TCU-HS Partnership Programs as referenced in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission, The Project Budget and Budget Justification*, and includes a narrative justification for the amount requested. The explanations of the calculations sufficiently show that the costs are critical to the success of the project. The budget is reasonable and appropriate for the project.
- All personnel funds are reasonable for the responsibilities and time dedicated to the TCU-HS Partnership Programs activities as described in *Section IV.2.*
- The applicant specifies sufficient funding to successfully carry out project activities as referenced in *Section I. Program Description, Post-Award Requirements and Section IV.2. Application Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission, The Project Description, The Project Budget and Budget Justification*, including travel and materials for meetings in Washington, DC; any trainings and conferences; and the proposed initial meeting for year 1. Funds are allocated accordingly.
- The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of the funds received and multiple funding streams described under this FOA as referenced in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission, The Project Description, Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities.*
- The applicant demonstrates strong evidence that the organization has the fiscal, administrative, and performance management capacity to effectively administer grant funds as referenced in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission, The Project Description, Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities.*

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process. ACF reserves the right to evaluate applications in the larger context of the overall portfolio by considering geographic distribution of federal funds (e.g., ensuring coverage of states, counties, or service areas) in its pre-award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested.

Pre-Award Discussions and Negotiations

ACF may enter into pre-award discussions and/or negotiations with one or more applicants regarding each applicant’s proposed project, budget, and other information related to its organizational capacity to provide high-quality, comprehensive early education services before making final award(s).

Additional Review and Funding Considerations

ACF will also consider the applicant’s demonstrated expertise in the higher education field, especially in early childhood education, and its experience and results with adult students.

Please note that if the applicant is a former TCU-HS Higher Education grantee, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider the applicant’s annual progress reports. These reports and documents may be considered in making final funding determinations.

ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant that is presently designated as "high risk," probationary or not in good standing, or has been debarred or defunded by any federal agency.

ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit of funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute. In the absence of such statutory authority, each prime recipient’s primary role must be to ensure the delivery of

the statutorily authorized services, whether provided directly or through collaborative involvement with their subrecipient(s). Prime recipients of an award under this FOA will be legally accountable to ACF for performance of the project or program. Prime recipients will be held solely responsible in the event of non-compliance by a subrecipient. Applicants proposing to use subrecipient(s) to complete the proposed project will be reviewed by ACF for any management or financial problems. ACF may elect to not allow a prime recipient to subaward if the prime recipient displays an inability to properly monitor and manage subrecipients.

The ACF Office of Grants Management will also perform an internal review of all property requests and documentation submitted to assess that costs comply with federal regulations and FOA requirements. ACF reserves the right to request any additional information (e.g., lease agreements, encumbrance documents, etc.) to ascertain allowability and may reduce the budget due to unallowable costs.

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), www.fapiis.gov/, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval in the objective review process, but not selected for award, may receive funding if additional funds become available or may compete for funding during the next review cycle (if one occurs in the next fiscal year). Applications designated as “approved but unfunded” typically cannot be kept in an active status for more than 12 months. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

VI.1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at www.ecfr.gov. Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-1>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not

constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Semi-Annually
Reports:

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

Recipients will be required to track and report grant funding and activities for OHS separately on their Semi-Annual Performance Progress Reports and Financial Reports.

VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Jennifer Amaya-Thompson
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Head Start
330 C Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (888) 242-0684
Email: OHS Tech@reviewops.org

Office of Grants Management Contact

Bridget Shea Westfall
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
330 C Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-5542
Email: bridget.sheawestfall@acf.hhs.gov

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) www.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) www.acf.hhs.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast www.grants.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements ami.grantsolutions.gov/.

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.

ACF Property Guidance <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property>

Grants.gov Accessibility Information www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

Head Start Act <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/head-start-act>

Head Start Program Performance Standards <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii>

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>

ECLKC Web and Communications Standards <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/internal-use/web-standards>

General Disaster Recovery Flexibilities Information Memorandum <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-19-01>

Applicant Support Resources

Applicants can find background information and data about Head Start on the [ECLKC](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/).

Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i>	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C. Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF- Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>These forms are available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.</p> <p>They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
SF-424 Key Contact Form	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> .	If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.